

1941

# OUR HOME FIELD



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## OUR HOME FIELD

WE have a great and varied mission work in the United States. The special classes of the English-speaking population and the numerous foreign-speaking people among whom our missionaries labor, give wider scope to the term "Home Missions" than it bears in any other country in the world. Not even in England, upon whose possessions the sun never sets, has any home missionary society so many and such widely differing classes and peoples within its field of work. In these days the nations of the world seem to be flowing together, and nowhere do the representatives of so many nationalities and languages come into business, social and political relations as in our own cosmopolitan country. We have not forgotten the foreigner who has come to our shores a candidate for citizenship or, at least, to engage in industrial, commercial and educational pursuits. While we send missionaries to his own brethren in the various countries of Europe, Asia, South America and Mexico, and in the islands of the seas, we strive to meet him on our own soil with an offer of all the powers, privileges and promises which the Gospel of Christ can convey. We have not forgotten the submerged tenth of

our own kith and kin as found in the slums of our cities ; nor the pitiful remnant of that pagan people who less than three centuries ago roamed at will over the length and breadth of this magnificent land ; nor the dusky descendants of the men and women stolen from Africa to be the slaves of the forefathers of this Republic ; nor the hapless people inoculated with the plague of Mormon leprosy ; nor the sturdy frontiersmen carrying civilization into the wilderness and laying broad and deep the foundations of great States ; nor the poor whites, so called, of the Southern borders, whose patriotism is as steadfast as the mountains they inhabit.

It is the constant endeavor of our Church to diffuse the blessings of the Gospel of peace as widely as possible in the home land. The character of the work done among foreign populations in the United States is not essentially different from that done among these populations abroad. Foreigners converted and educated on our soil go back to the lands of their birth to labor for their countrymen. Persons connected with our mission churches abroad come here and give their lives to the advancement of the kingdom among those speaking the same tongue. The currents flow back and forth and intermingle in a Christianity common to all our fields and equal to all demands upon it as a saving power. I can attempt only a brief description of the various classes of our home missions.

1. *Among the Indians.* It was a revival among the Wyandot Indians, under the preaching of a colored man named John Stewart, which directly led to the organization of our Missionary Society in 1819. The efforts among the various tribes, particularly the Creeks, Cherokees and Choc-taws, were very successful, and when the division of the Church took place in 1844 the Methodist Episcopal Church,



South, fell heir to the larger share of our Indian work. What we have to-day is but a faint indication of the great work done for the salvation of the red man since the first small beginnings in 1814. We have at present thirty-five Indian missions within the bounds of thirteen Conferences, of which five are in New York, six on the Pacific coast, one in Montana and twenty-three in the States of the Mississippi Valley. Among the laborers are thirty-two missionaries and sixteen local preachers, and there are 2,019 members and probationers. The annual results are encouraging, and if we could do more we would have more to show.

2. *Among the Negroes.* From the first our Church has labored earnestly for the salvation of Africans, and with wonderful success. "Black Harry," the traveling companion of Bishop Asbury, was a most eloquent preacher to his own people, and into Methodist churches have been gathered more colored members than into any other family of Protestant denominations. We have no special missions to the black people of the United States, but large sums are annually appropriated to colored Conferences for the support of charges which would otherwise be unable to exist. There are twenty-one of these Conferences, and the aggregate of appropriations to them for 1906 is \$45,525. These appropriations are being gradually decreased in many cases, so as to stimulate self-support.

3. *Among the Southern Whites.* (White Conferences covering Southern States except Maryland. Map 4.) It is an interesting fact that the group of Conferences showing the largest proportionate net increase of communicants in the four years ending in 1900 was that which constitutes our white work in the South. There are fifteen of these Con-

ferences, including the Atlantic Mission. The appropriations for 1906 for this class of work amount to \$52,745. Thousands of people in the mountains of Tennessee, Kentucky, the Virginias and the Carolinas are reached by this work, who might otherwise be left destitute of Gospel privileges. They make sturdy Methodists when converted at our altars, and, with their intense loyalty to country, excellent citizens when educated in our institutions.

4. *Among the Mormons.* Utah has long been a plague spot in our country, and the peculiar tenet of Mormonism a reproach to our civilization. The followers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, coming largely from the ignorant classes of the United States and Europe, have been to the Mormon priesthood as clay in the hands of the potter. They claim to be Christians, and use many of the forms and statements which distinguish Christianity from other religions; but their faith is as different essentially from Christianity as is the religion of Islam. They are a besotted, priest-ridden people, have no proper reverence for the sacred things of the Scripture, and speak of God in blasphemous terms. They are a hard people to reach with the Gospel, because their spurious gospel resembles the real in so many things. We have faithful men working in various parts of Utah, and among our communicants are not a few excellent men and women who have renounced the hideous doctrines of Smith and Young, and become true followers of Jesus Christ. We have in Utah twenty missionaries, five local preachers, and 1,374 members and probationers.

5. *Work on the Frontier.* (Map 4.) As civilization has pushed its way into the wilderness from the Eastern slope of the United States to the Western, across the Alle-

ghanies into Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, across the Mississippi Valley into and beyond the Rocky Mountains, our missionaries have kept even pace with it. The hardy settlers have never camped on ground too new or too perilous for the preacher to occupy. History records glorious deeds in behalf of the Church, and the sublime efforts which planted the Church also contributed to the building of the State. Our frontiers to-day are in the Rocky Mountain regions and on the Pacific coast. Soon this class of work will be finished so far as the continent is concerned, but the settlement of Alaska opens a similar field in that large territory, and the acquisition of Hawaii, Porto Rico and the Philippines suggests that opportunity for home work will not soon be closed. It is true that the Philippines are classed with the foreign work, but they are now soil of the United States, and present problems not unlike those confronting us in Hawaii and Porto Rico. We expend annually in frontier work in the Rocky Mountains, on the Pacific coast, and in Hawaii and Alaska upward of \$140,000. Appropriations for Church Extension have also been made to the Philippine Islands.

6. *Among the Spanish-speaking Peoples.* (Map 2.) This very important work is conducted in New Mexico, southern California and Porto Rico. The New Mexico Spanish Mission, which was begun in 1850, organized in 1875, and organized as a Mission Conference in 1892, embraces New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, a part of Texas and two states of Mexico. The work is in an encouraging condition, but needs more means that it may be enlarged, and particularly that the educational arm may be strengthened. Work was begun in Porto Rico in March, 1900, and as the result of only four years' work we have about 1,900 com-



Map No. 2  
 Conference Boundaries of our Scandinavian and Spanish-speaking  
 Domestic Conferences and Missions.



municants. Our work is in San Juan, Guayama, Ponce, Utuado and Arecibo. The appropriations for 1906 for our Spanish work amount to \$42,805. Last year between sixty and seventy missionaries were employed, and 5,122 members and probationers were reported. Porto Rico offers a singularly attractive and promising field.

7. *Among the French.* The first missionary of the society to the French was sent to Louisiana. Our most important French field is now in New England and in Illinois. The French Canadians, who are ardent Roman Catholics, are coming across the border in large numbers and settling in the mill towns of New England. We devote but a small sum comparatively to their evangelization, the appropriation for 1906 being only \$4,295. Last year we had seven missionaries engaged in this work, and 201 members and probationers. These figures do not represent the entire results. Many learn the English language and attach themselves to our English churches, and so are no longer counted in connection with our missions.

8. *Among the Welsh.* We have missions among these people in their own language within the bounds of northern New York, Philadelphia, Wyoming and Wisconsin Conferences, and the last returns indicated 185 communicants.

9. *Among the Germans.* (Map 1.) The conversion of William Nast in 1835 was an epoch in Methodism, for it was really the beginning of those efforts among the Germans in this country and in the fatherland which have made German Methodism a power in the world. Nast was the first German missionary, and began work in the city of Cincinnati. Out of that beginning have grown ten German

Conferences, including North Pacific Mission. For the extension of Gospel influences these Conferences are to receive in 1906 about \$42,090. Last year this work employed 541 missionaries, and reported 63,908 members and probationers. It is a great and growing Gospel enterprise.

10. *Among the Scandinavians.* (Map 2.) In the same year that Dr. Nast was converted Olaf Gustaf Hedstrom was received on trial in New York Conference, and ten years later inaugurated a movement among his own countrymen in New York which made him the founder of our Scandinavian missions. These missions, including Norwegians, Swedes and Danes, now require more than \$58,110 a year for their support. They are widely distributed over the country, extending from New England westward to the Pacific Ocean, and south as far as Texas. Last year 226 missionaries were engaged in preaching to their countrymen, and 24,882 communicants were reported.

11. *Among the Finns.* In recent years there has been a large immigration of Finns to this country, on account of the persecutions of the Russian government. Their numbers here are estimated at 200,000 or more. We have missions among them in northern Minnesota, Michigan, Massachusetts and California.

12. *Work Among the Italians.* Of late years there has been a large increase in the stream of immigration from Italy, and Italians are found in considerable numbers in most of the cities of the country, Greater New York being, of course, the chief Italian center. Our missions are in Cincinnati, Buffalo, Boston, Providence, Chicago, New York, New Orleans, Philadelphia and other cities. We have 1,873 members and probationers. These results compare favorably

with those of our Mission in Italy. The annual appropriations exceed \$20,000 for this work in the United States.

13. *Among the Bohemians and Hungarians.* The missions among these populations have steadily developed, and the results are decidedly encouraging. We have an extensive work among the Bohemians in Cleveland, Ohio, and in Chicago and other cities. Our Bohemian Sunday School in Cleveland has no fewer than 140 members. The annual appropriation, amounting to about \$13,550, is divided among Baltimore, Rock River, Pittsburg, Upper Iowa, East Ohio, North Ohio, Nebraska and Northwest Kansas Conferences. Akin to this work is the mission to "foreign populations" in Hazleton, Pa., reaching peoples from central Europe.

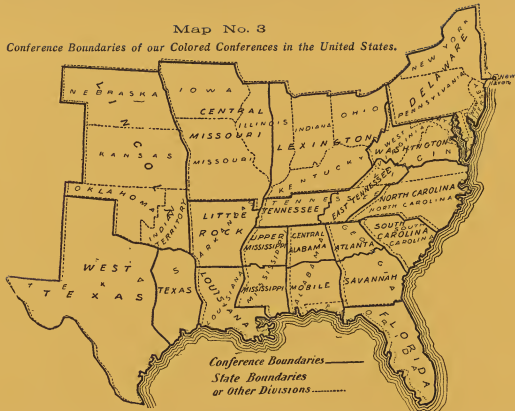
14. *Among the Portuguese.* There are colonies of these people within the bounds of California, New England and New England Southern Conferences, and about \$2,065 is annually appropriated for work among them. There are three missionaries, and 169 members are reported.

15. *Among the Jews.* The Jews are everywhere, and everywhere their fading hope of the coming of the Messiah appeals to the sympathies of the Church, and we send missionaries among them to assure them that the Anointed One has come, and that His Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Our chief work among the Jews is in New York and Philadelphia.

16. *Among the Deaf-mutes.* These unfortunate people appeal in their helplessness to the Church of Christ. They appreciate, more than most of those who can hear, the preaching of the Gospel by those who can use the sign

# Map No. 3

Conference Boundaries of our Colored Conferences in the United States.



language. We have missions to them in Baltimore and Chicago.

17. *Among the Chinese.* The Chinese came early to our western shores, and before there was any thought of evangelizing them they had their temples on American soil and were performing their pagan rites. In 1868 missionary work among them was begun on the Pacific coast by Otis Gibson, D.D., who had been for ten years a missionary in Foochow, China. We now have Chinese missions in San Francisco, Sacramento and other cities in California, in Portland, Oregon, in New York and in Boston, which are supported at an annual outlay of about \$16,000.

18. *Among the Japanese.* This work was begun in 1877. It embraces many places in California, and extends to Portland, Oregon. San Francisco is, of course, the center. There are also missions in the Hawaiian Islands. The work is carried on by Japanese, with Rev. H. B. Johnson as superintendent. Young Japanese are attending our various theological schools in preparation for the ministry. The appropriations are over \$19,000.

In the Chinese and Japanese work we have a number of missionaries and 2,097 members and probationers. These figures represent only the work on the Pacific coast. In many cities Chinese and Japanese are gathered into our churches through special Sunday-school work. How many hundreds there are who have become communicants in this way it is impossible to say. It should also be said that many Chinese and Japanese preachers, converted in connection with our mission work in this country, go back to their own people across the sea and become successful preachers of the Word.



19. *Among the Koreans.* We have a very prosperous work among the Koreans of the Hawaiian Islands, and a small mission for these enterprising people in California.

In the merest outline our missionary work in the United States is described in the foregoing. No space is left for comment and exhortation. It is to be hoped that those who read will see in all these missions great and urgent opportunities for more and grander work for Christ. Let us have more for Home Missions, more for Foreign Missions, more for the conversion of the world. Doors are wide open, missionaries are ready to enter them; will the Church furnish the means?

The following table gives the charges and the number of members and probationers in such charges, value of churches and chapels, amount raised for self-support, and contributions for Missionary Society in 1906. This table does not include all who receive missionary aid, nor churches which have become self-supporting. Our funds support in part, besides the missionaries enumerated in the table, considerably more than 3,000 preachers. If these are included, we have probably 4,000 home missionaries.

# SUMMARY OF THE DOMESTIC MISSIONS FOR 1905-1906.

MISSIONS.	No. of Charges receiving Missionary Aid.	Members and Probationers in Charges receiving Missionary Aid.	Value of Property in Charges receiving Missionary Aid.	Amount given for Self-support.	Amount given for Self-support in Charges receiving Missionary Aid.	Total Amount given to the Missionary Society.
DIVISION 1.—English-Speaking.						
Conferences north of the Potomac and Ohio and east of the Mississippi River	416	26,583	\$1,462,509	\$1,892,116	\$166,035	\$216,116
Conferences in Iowa and Kansas and States north of them, including Black Hills and Oklahoma Conferences	879	59,640	2,230,339	1,776,446	342,715	185,169
Work in the Mountain Region	272	13,299	852,200	322,507	120,442	27,576
Pacific Coast	336	17,571	860,470	619,395	131,961	64,985
White Work in the South, Maryland and Delaware excepted	575	85,076	1,799,112	644,452	144,948	70,572
Colored Work, mostly in the South	867	66,485	1,143,816	707,104	148,805	30,116
Total	3,345	268,654	\$8,348,446	\$5,962,020	\$1,054,906	\$594,534
DIVISION 2.—Non-English-Speaking.						
Welsh	2	185	22,000	874	861	78
Swedish	140	8,290	764,168	102,823	44,678	14,612
Norwegian and Danish	87	4,377	401,980	39,936	22,372	6,146
German	276	20,094	1,512,504	411,054	109,069	48,858
French	5	134	28,000	2,493	1,756	98
Spanish	64	4,667	113,550	4,301	3,403	547
Chinese	11	336	16,000	128	126	354
Japanese	33	1,761	87,000	7,246	7,206	683
Bohemian and Hungarian	14	466	58,000	3,915	3,579	421
Italian	11	867	4,000	7,503	3,078	189
Portuguese	2	81	5,000	20		28
Finnish	9	168	6,800	73	70	37
Foreign Populations	3	22	1,500	1,200	1,200	57
American Indians	35	2,019	48,425	1,649	1,649	277
Total	692	43,467	\$3,068,927	\$583,215	\$199,049	\$72,385
Total for Domestic Missions	4,037	312,121	11,417,373	6,545,235	1,253,955	666,919